

Washington Roundup

MX Basing Study

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The Reagan Administration MX advanced ICBM blue ribbon basing panel headed by retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, former national security adviser to the President, is moving toward a package of compromise recommendations for missile basing. These are: place 50 MXs in Minuteman silos at Francis E. Warren AFB, Cheyenne, Wyo., the deepest Minuteman silos; simultaneously continue detailed theoretical and experimental studies of closely spaced basing with deceptive capsules or accelerate an experimental test program for superhardened capsules for closely spaced basing, and conduct active research and development on the small ICBM (AW&ST May 4, 1981, p. 49). The small ICBM concept originally was proposed by Boeing. The small ballistic missile development, according to an official associated with the group, is not inconsistent with deep underground basing in the early 1990s. The Scowcroft panel is receiving briefings from special counselors who include former Defense secretaries Harold Brown, James Schlesinger, Melvin Laird, Donald Rumsfeld; former secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and Cyrus Vance; former under secretary of Defense for research and engineering William Perry; former CIA chief John McCone; William VanCleve, former Reagan Administration transition team leader in the Pentagon, and retired Army Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency. Prof. Charles Townes briefed the Scowcroft group last week. Brown resigned from the panel, citing a conflict of interest with his job as a consultant for TRW, Inc.

Trade Policy Year

Members of the new 98th Congress, convened last week, dubbed 1983 the year of trade policy and the White House said more lending authority might be sought for the Export-Import Bank if foreign subsidies warrant it (AW&ST Jan. 17, p. 15). Fiscal 1984 Exim direct loan request will be about \$3.8 billion, the same as last year, but the Administration may request \$2.7 billion more if it is needed to counter inappropriate foreign government export financing practices. Guarantee authority would rise from the current \$8 billion to \$10 billion. Congressional hearings will start shortly on renewing Exim Bank's charter and on reauthorization of the Export Administration Act, which controls militarily sensitive civilian exports.

Space shuttle Mission 6 launch delay has forced difficult payload tradeoff decisions for all 1983 shuttle flights. One option is deletion of the current Mission 6 Tracking and Data Relay Satellite payload and astronaut crew. Challenger's first flight then would be the crew and payload planned for Mission 7, on which cargo includes Indonesian and Canadian communications spacecraft and the German Spas-01 retrievable pallet. Flying the Mission 7 payload first would also allow Mission 8 to launch its TDRSS payload in mid-summer in time to support Spacelab 1 in October. The original Mission 6 crew and TDRSS payload then would be recycled back into the schedule for a later flight. A second option is to run the Mission 6, 7 and 8 payload sequence as planned, but then delay Spacelab 1 for about five months.

U. S.-Italy Talks

U. S. and Italy have scheduled new talks to overcome problems of technology transfer, co-financing of exports and unemployment in the civil aircraft field due to depressed airline demand. The talks are a result of an agreement reached late last year between President Reagan and then Italian Prime Minister Giovanni Spadolini establishing a working group to review existing Italian-American aerospace cooperation and discuss ways in which both countries could promote additional future cooperation. A first meeting between the Italian aerospace delegation headed by Vittorio Barattieri, director general of industrial production in the Ministry of Industry, and Stephen Piper, coordinator of U. S. aerospace trade policy in the Office of the U. S. Trade Representative, led to an agreement to explore joint measures to overcome Italian-American aerospace industrial problems.

12-Year Wait

Testimony before the House subcommittee on military construction, usually a tedious bricks and mortar affair, should liven up now that Rep. Ron Dellums (D.-Calif.) has finally been elected its chairman. Another Democratic gadfly, Wisconsin's Les Aspin, becomes chairman of the subcommittee on personnel. Dellums, a vociferous critic of the Dept. of Defense—he is shadow defense secretary on the Congressional Black Caucus cabinet—says he will raise questions on MX missile basing, civil defense and the rapid deployment forces. Said Dellums, "I have waited 12 years for this opportunity, and I intend to make the most of it. . . ."

—Washington Staff